

Bloomfield Citizen.

WEEKLY JOURNAL

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THE CITIZEN solicits contributions from the general public on any subject—political, religious, educational, or social—as long as they do not contain any personal attacks.
All communications must be accompanied by the writer's name, not necessarily for publication, but as an evidence of good faith.
Advertisements for insertion in the current week must be in hand not later than Friday noon.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1906.

The Recall Bill.

The wide-spread public agitation over matters political has resulted in some drastic legislative propositions. Among the propositions of this character are the bills known as the recall bills suggested by the State Civic Federation and drafted by Thomas A. Davis of Orange, in conjunction with Alden Freeman and Senator Colby. The bills are in the hands of Senator Colby.

One bill provides that the holder of any elective office, except the Governor, may be removed at any time by the voters qualified to vote for a successor of such incumbent, and gives the method by which such removal is to be accomplished. A petition signed by twenty per cent. of the entire vote for all the candidates for the office in case of a State or county office, demanding an election of a successor, shall be filed with the municipal clerk in the case of a municipal officer, and with the county clerk in case of a county officer.

This shall state the grounds on which the removal is sought, and a copy must be served upon the officer sought to be removed. Upon receiving a certificate from the clerk that the petition is regular in form, the County Board of Elections is directed to order a new election in not less than thirty or more than forty days from the date of the clerk's certificate.

The successor of any person so removed shall hold office for the unexpired term only. Any person sought to be so removed may be a candidate to succeed himself, and, unless he requests otherwise, the clerk shall place his name on the official ballot without nomination. If the person sought to be removed should be re-elected the person filing the petition shall pay the expenses of the election, to cover which they must file a bond with the petition.

In the case of an appointive officer, who may likewise be removed, the procedure differs somewhat. For the removal of officials appointed by the chief magistrate or governing body of a municipality the petition is to be signed by ten per cent. of the voters of the municipality; for the removal of a county appointee, by five per cent. of the electors of the county, and for the removal of a State appointee, three per cent. of the voters of the State.

For the removal of a municipal officer the petition must be filed with the municipal clerk; for the removal of a county official with the county clerk, and for a State appointee with the Secretary of State. When the petitions are certified to as being correct by the officers with whom they are filed, the appointing body or officers shall appoint a commission which shall investigate the charges and report its findings to the appointing power. If the appointing power disapproves the findings of the commission, a new commission shall be named and shall proceed in the same manner. If the commission finds the accused official guilty, and the appointive power approves, the accused shall be deemed removed from office.

Building and Loan Associations.

The building and loan associations of this vicinity and State are becoming important factors in financial and building activities. Loans have been made as far as it is permitted by the law and the applications exceed many times the amount to be loaned. The associations are able to loan their money to the best borrowers. It is to be noted that the amount of the loans has been raised considerably on account of the enactment of house laws, which have elevated the class of homes to be put up and the requirements have forced the investor to invest more money. Few buildings are now erected on a twenty-five foot lot because the law does not permit the whole area to be occupied by the building. This has made the thirty-seven and a half foot lot a necessity.

The bill that has been introduced in the State Legislature is a South Jersey measure and is little discussed in association circles about Newark. The purpose of the bill is to obtain permission to loan money to persons not members of the association. It is also proposed to permit the associations to lend a larger part of their funds. The tendency is to make the associations more like savings banks or trust companies. This is contrary to the original building and loan idea, for it was primarily a poor man's method of saving. Prominent building and loan men of Newark have expressed opposition to the bill. Commerce and Finance.

Howard MacSherry on Local Option.

At a meeting of the German-American Central Association held in Turn Hall, Newark, Sunday, Assembly bill No. 188, otherwise known as the local option bill, was discussed and roundly denounced. Among the speakers was Howard MacSherry, a well-known lawyer.

Mr. MacSherry said that twenty years ago, when the temperance question was being agitated, he was the only man in his party to advise against taking up local option, and he predicted it would go down to defeat. That was the first and last prophecy of his that had ever come true, he added.

The speaker said he had noted the criticisms that had resulted from Mr. Skinner's speech at a hearing in Trenton, and had privately expressed the conviction that the former Judge was deserving of praise. A person who heard him, continued Mr. MacSherry, dared him to give the views in public, and that was one of the reasons he was present at the meeting.

Mr. MacSherry, after remarking that he could not be accused of being an attorney for brewery interests, went on to refer to the "unexampled and splendid" prosperity of New Jersey, the absence of a State tax upon education, and an uncorrupted judiciary. Notwithstanding all this, he asserted, somebody was dissatisfied and unwilling to "let well enough alone."

"I say without fear of successful contradiction," he continued, "that this agitation for local option does not come from the heart of the people. It is sentiment manufactured pure and simple by a number of gentlemen who are narrow-minded and prejudiced. Some gentlemen—not all, you understand—were born dissatisfied. They didn't want to come into the world, and they are sorry they are here. These people look at every glass of beer as if there was a serpent in the bottom ready to bite them as soon as they lifted it to their lips. And forsooth they think that the only thing fit to put down your throat is a glass of Orton or whatever else you call it."

"These are the people who say it is wrong to smoke, and forsooth, because they don't want to drink and smoke, they want to force others to do likewise. I don't believe in the dilettante or bon vivant, but there's a happy medium. Just as soon as they finish this question of local option it will be a question of prohibiting smoking."

Mr. MacSherry agreed with Dr. Hexamer that local option caused the practice of hypocrisy and deceit. "Look at Asbury Park," said he. "There is no license there, but anybody can get all the whiskey and drink he wants in the cellars of the hotels. Why, there are more boys and young women to be found drinking intoxicants there than in the lowest brothel in this city. The prohibition laws of the New England States are the laughing stock of the sensible people in those States."

"I ask, why this agitation? You remember the last election, don't you? You good people of Essex county were terribly excited. Did you hear anything on either side of local option? There was only one question—limited franchise. Yes, equal taxation, too. You elected your Legislature to get that. Now, why don't they give it to you? Why be sidetracked on a purely moral issue as this is? I don't understand it. Temperance will always be a purely moral question. You may pass laws, but they will not make a good son or husband and father if a man is inclined otherwise. If you say to a man, 'You shall not drink,' why, he'll say, 'I'll take a drink before morning if it kills me.' That's human nature."

"Any citizen who says that this local option bill is a fair bill must be either narrow and bigoted in his mind or ignorant. The measure suggested must be proposed by men who do not understand that this great, immense nation has become a cosmopolitan country; they do not understand that the laws should come, not from the exclusive, but from the throbbing masses."

Mr. MacSherry said that in spirit there was local option at present, through the Excise Commissioners. While he came from New Brunswick, Mr. MacSherry said, he had always protested against the interior excises attempting to govern the big cities by legislation. The present trouble, he declared, was caused by people who did not like a republican form of government and distrusted their own people. If more care was exercised by the authorities as to the qualifications of those who enter the liquor business, but little fault could be found, the speaker said.

Want a Factory Site.

The efforts of the Westinghouse Electric Company to obtain property in Watessing for building purposes have so far proved unsuccessful. It was the intention of the company to purchase a portion of the property east of the Erie Railroad tracks, but it is said a clear title to the same could not be obtained, so the deal fell through. The land now used as a ball field by the Watessing B. B. C. on Arlington avenue was also looked at by the company, but it is said the owners wanted too high a price for it. The latter asked for the property \$25,000.

Reception and Dance.

The reception and dance of the employees of the local branch of the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company held at Central Hall Monday night was a success in every particular. The hall was decorated and guests were present from many parts of the county. Frederick Macdonald's orchestra furnished music.

Historic Reminiscences.

Matthew Dodd of Grove street, East Orange, who is ninety-two years old, a descendant of Daniel Dodd, the first one of the family who came to this country, and whose name appears on the first tax list of Newark in 1668, is well versed in historic matters. Mr. Dodd, in speaking of the past, however, is only able to enlighten us as far back as his grandfather's time; but when we calculate the age of the grandfather of a man now ninety-two years old, we find it takes us back to the era of 1776.

The house now occupied by Mr. Dodd stands on land purchased by his grandfather, and is the place where both he and his father were born. It was a portion of an immense farm that was owned by the Ward family of Newark. Some of the ground was sold during the boyhood of Mr. Dodd for sixteen and a half dollars an acre. Sixteen and a half dollars would not buy one-half of a foot of it now.

The grandfather, Matthias Dodd the first, was an American soldier during the Revolutionary War, and Mr. Dodd tells us that he well remembers as a little boy playing with an old pair of buckskin trousers and a cartridge box that had been used in service by his grandfather. He also tells us that he has presented to the collection at Washington's headquarters at Morristown a gun captured at the battle of Monmouth, marked 1773, London, and that it may be seen at Morristown at any time.

We are all familiar with the manner in which "Whiskey Lane," now Grove street, received its name. Up to the time of the soldiers emptying the liquor into the lane from Caleb Baldwin's barn it had not been deemed necessary to give it any name at all, but that act proved to be the christening of "Whiskey Lane." Perhaps some have not been able to locate the old historic barn. It stood on the west side of Grove street, about 200 feet south of Park avenue, on the spot where George Dorer's house, No. 257 Grove street, now stands. Mr. Dodd gives us this as authentic, and also the fact that the day the barn was torn down was January 24, 1814, the day on which he was born.

From Henry Culbertson of North Maple avenue we learn that his grandfather, who lived near the same spot where he is now living, has often told him for a fact that General Washington encamped for one night in the woods where Park avenue is now, near Grove street, remaining but one night, and not done so we might have had a skirmish to record, for he said the British soldiers occupied the same premises the next night.

Mr. Culbertson remembers well of hearing the story more than once, and is satisfied of its truth. History tells us that Washington traversed this part of the country, going from Newark to Belleville and Bloomfield, why should we be any improbability that he took a course through "Whiskey Lane," stopping at the place mentioned?

Direct Nominations.

Alden Freeman of East Orange, one of Essex county's most insistent and indefatigable political reformers, and whose mission in life seems to be the demolition of machine politics in town, county, State and nation, has issued an enumeration of the reforms he would like to see brought about. One of them is direct nominations in municipal and county elections. This change in the primary election law Mr. Freeman says will do away with city and county conventions in the same manner that ward conventions have been dispensed with. In this reform we ought to have the assistance of the "boss of Hudson county," for he announces that he wishes to do away with political conventions altogether. Probably Mr. Record and the Colby and Fagan campaigns have shown him how unnecessary county conventions really are. So, turning reformer himself, the Secretary of State throws the State Convention as a sop to the people to prevent his conversion.

Let each candidate formulate his own platform, and then the people can judge for themselves what sort of man they are voting for. When Assemblymen are once more chosen by districts there will be still less excuse for county conventions. The tendency in politics, as to business, is to eliminate the middleman. The principles of direct legislation and the referendum will be incorporated in the new State Constitution if the plain people of New Jersey have their way. In the Colby movement they are manifesting their will in no uncertain terms.

Mr. Freeman's Book.

Alden Freeman of East Orange is publishing a book based on his personal experiences in political reform work and dedicated to the late Henry G. Atwater of East Orange. The book is embellished by cartoons, and in the text Mr. Freeman has not allowed himself to be governed by fear of libel suits. He deals in plain language with the Legislature, and those who have seen the sheets already off the press say the book is the strongest arraignment of the political powers in New Jersey that has yet been printed.

Dramatic Entertainment.

"The Confusion of Kitty," a two-act farce by Philip A. Gifford, will be produced by the members of the Catholic Lyceum Dramatic Association in Union Hall on February 26 and 27, for the benefit of the Church of the Sacred Heart.

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Library Notes.

Accompanying the well-known picture of Washington crossing the Delaware, we have been glad to see once more the Ballad of Daniel Bryn, written by Rev. Joseph Folsom, who was not so many years ago a Bloomfield boy. "What has been done, may be done," so sharpen your pencil Bloomfield boys, and if some day you can do as well as Mr. Folsom, the old town will be just as proud of you.

"The Long Day" is full of interest to all concerned with the welfare of girls and women in the world of work. It is the real experience of a real girl, and should rouse the kind of interest which bears fruit. Conclusions are drawn in the last pages, evils are stated remedies suggested, and the kernel of the nut is in this proposition: skilled labor works, unskilled labor is worked.

Cy Warman has given us more pages out of his own experience under the guise of fiction in "The Last Spike," another collection of vigorous, swift-moving stories of railroad life. The first is perhaps the best, and we feel the thrill of conquest as we read of the years of fighting against heat and cold, the sands of the plain and the snows of the mountains; of the dogged perseverance that drew the steel ribbons nearer and nearer to each other from opposite sides of the continent. Then came that great day when after skirmishes with hostile Indians and skeptical financiers, rail met rail, and East and West were joined together for all time. "The silver hammer began beating the golden spike into the laurel tie, which bore a silver plate upon which was engraved, The Last Tie Laid in the Completion of the Pacific Railroad, May 10, 1869."

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Strike 3! 1906?



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